

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 9, 2008 – 8:00 a.m.
6th Floor Conference Room
Council Office Building

Commission Members Present:

Nancy Soreng, Chair
Alice Gresham Bullock, Vice-Chair
Michael Cogan
Wilbur Friedman
Mollie Habermeier
Robert Shoenberg
Judith Vandegriff
Anne Marie Vassallo
Charles Wolff

Staff:

Justina Ferber, County Council Staff
Marie Jean-Paul, County Council Staff
Marc Hansen, County Attorney's Office
Amanda Mihill, County Council Staff

Guests:

Dale Tibbits, Councilmember Elrich's Office

Commission Members Absent:

Karen Czapanskiy
Dianne Felton

Commission Chair Nancy Soreng called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

I. Administrative Items

Approved the minutes from the December 12 Commission meeting. Motion made by Charles Wolff and seconded by Wilbur Friedman. The motion was unanimous among those present.

II. Discussion and potential refinement of issues adopted for study

The Commission discussed potential issues to study and made the following decisions:

- Study, with the goal of putting forward a recommendation, whether moot provisions should be removed from the Charter: Motion made by Wilbur Friedman and seconded by Alice Gresham Bullock.
 - In favor: Alice Gresham Bullock, Michael Cogan, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Robert Shoenberg, Nancy Soreng, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (9)

Commission members requested the following information to be used in their deliberations:

- Memorandum from Council staff on these issues.

- Study, with the goal of putting forward a recommendation, whether an affirmative vote of 9 Councilmembers should be required to approve a property tax increase that will produce total revenue that exceeds the Consumer Price Index. Motion made by Wilbur Friedman and seconded by Michael Cogan.

In favor: Alice Gresham Bullock, Michael Cogan, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Robert Shoenberg, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (8)

Abstain: Nancy Soreng (1)

Commission members requested the following information to be used in their deliberations:

- History on number of times supermajority was required to enact property tax increases beyond the Consumer Price Index increase and number of votes at each event.
 - History of proposed Charter amendments related to fiscal constraint that residents voted on, and the results of those elections.
- Study, with the possibility of making a recommendation for the May report, whether special taxing districts that cover a limited geographic area should be excluded from the limitation on property tax revenue growth. Motion made by Judith Vandegriff and seconded by Alice Gresham Bullock.

In favor: Alice Gresham Bullock, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Robert Shoenberg, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (7)

Oppose: Michael Cogan (1)

Abstain: Nancy Soreng (1)

Commission members requested the following information to be used in their deliberations:

- Fiscal impact of this proposal.
 - Ways to seek community input.
- Study, with the possibility of making a recommendation for the May report, whether the Charter be amended to provide for an Executive nominated, Council confirmed Inspector General. Motion made by Michael Cogan and seconded by Wilbur Friedman.

In favor: Alice Gresham Bullock, Michael Cogan, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Robert Shoenberg, Nancy Soreng, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (9)

Commission members requested the following information to be used in their deliberations:

- Legislative history, testimony, legal opinions and other documents related to the original creation of the Inspector General office.
- Perspective from the current Inspector General, including how the Office of the Inspector General contributes to the welfare of the County.

- Inspector General appointment/retention process in other jurisdictions.
- Ways to seek community input.
- Defer discussion of whether the number of Councilmembers, the number of districts, and/or the ratio of at-large and district members should be changed, but note in the May 1 report that the Commission is studying this issue. Motion made by Charles Wolff and seconded by Alice Gresham Bullock.
 - In favor: Alice Gresham Bullock, Michael Cogan, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Robert Shoenberg, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (8)
 - Abstain: Nancy Soreng (1)
- Defer discussion of whether the method for selecting the Council President should be changed, but note in the May 1 report that the Commission is studying this issue. Motion made by Charles Wolff and seconded by Alice Gresham Bullock.
 - In favor: Alice Gresham Bullock, Michael Cogan, Wilbur Friedman, Mollie Habermeier, Robert Shoenberg, Judith Vandegriff, Anne Marie Vassallo, Charles Wolff (8)
 - Abstain: Nancy Soreng (1)

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

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